

COTHAM SCHOOL

Meeting of the Academy Governing Body

Thursday 10 September 2020

MINUTES OF MEETING

Governors Present:		
Dora Alderson, CG	Andrew Chadwick, PG	Lucy Hunt, PG
Jack Barber, SG	Jane Chamberlin, PG	Morag Pirie, SG
Jim Bowyer, LA	Jo Feather PG	Richard Puttick, PG
Jo Butler, Headteacher	Sandra Fryer, CG (Chair)	Rebecca Reid, PG
Ed Carpenter, SG		
In Attendance (non-voting) Allison Crossland, Business Manager Domini Leong, Deputy Headteacher Chris Reed, Deputy Headteacher Aimi Potter, Assistant Head, Post 16 Leanne Sowersby, Clerk	Apologies John Bass, PG Absent: David Yorath CG	Governors in Post: 15/19 Quorum = 5 (1/3 rounded up) AM = Associate Member CG = Community Governor PG = Parent Governor SG = Staff Governor SMT = Senior Management Team

Item	Minutes of Meeting
1	Welcome, Apologies for Absence, declarations of interest and notification of AOB Apologies accepted. No declarations of interest.
2	Elections JBo advised that he intends to step down as Chair. JBo thanked Governors for their support during his time as Chair. Chair – LS took over the Chair. SF nominated for Chair by JBo, seconded JF. SF took over the Chair. SF thanked JBo for his work as Chair and would like to retain his skills and expertise. Vice Chair – No nominations for the post of Vice-Chair. SF Proposed that JBo take the role for the next cycle while we discuss succession planning. Proposal seconded by MP and agreed. Committee Chairs: Learning & Wellbeing – Jo Feather and Jane Chamberlin proposed by DA, seconded by MP – JF and JC elected unopposed as co-Chairs Finance, Premises and General Purposes – JBo willing to Chair in the short term to allow SF to focus on the Chair's role, with a view to bringing in a new Chair over the course of the year. Proposed SF, seconded JBar. Personnel & Training – John Bass proposed by DA, seconded JBo. JBAs elected unopposed – to be confirmed with JBAs that he is willing to continue. Appointments & Standards – Jo Feather, proposed DA, seconded LH. JF elected unopposed.

	<p>Discussion around the new Governors and how much they are able to make decisions on these things. SF would like to have conversations with all of the Governors, especially the new Governors, around their skills and interests in relation to Governance.</p>
3	<p>Code of Practice LS has shared this via GovernorHub and Governors are asked to complete the declaration on GovernorHub that they have read and agree to it.</p> <p>Declarations of Interest LS will send the interests she has on file to individual Governors. Governors are asked to read the information on the forms carefully and to confirm the records are correct or notify LS of any changes by e-mail. There will be a need for signed copies of the forms.</p>
4	<p>Safeguarding Briefing DL gave a briefing – this is a summary as the updated Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance has been circulated.</p> <p>There will be a need to schedule more comprehensive training.</p>
5	<p>Academies Financial Handbook Update</p> <p>AC talked through the key issues.</p> <p>LS to check that the register of interests meets the requirements as detailed in the handbook.</p> <p>There are other actions listed within the paper.</p> <p>Discussion around pupil numbers.</p> <p>Q – Is there a way to facilitate the risk register? Would a Governor with responsibility for this be useful? AC needs some dedicated time for this – AC and JBu have done significant groundwork for this but there has been little time over the last few months.</p>
6	<p>Headteacher’s Report</p> <p>JBu highlighted how busy things have been in school and thanked the leadership team for the work they have been doing. Also highlighted the hours being worked by EC. JBu thanked Staff Governors as representative of staff.</p> <p>Strategic and Improvement Plan/Priorities</p> <p>JBu talked through the key points of the report. Links are included to the Strategic Plan and a draft School Improvement Plan.</p> <p>Q – Is the ESFA programme CPD referred to an accredited course? No, but it is a very good evidence-based package – the programme is delivered internally. We will form teaching and learning communities and there will be someone leading each community using the materials from the programme.</p> <p>Start of term update</p> <p>JBu gave an update on the start of term, including around some of the issues with the Centre Assessed Grades (CAGs). There was significant work from all of the staff teams involved. JBu gave an overview of the work involved in preparing both for the CAGs results day, and the return to school. Especially for SLT, the site team and AC.</p> <p>The work now is around snags that need to be addressed.</p> <p>Are working on how to support students and looking at their needs. Will need to be aware of whether there is any trauma arising from the pandemic and lockdown.</p> <p>Have met and discussed the new challenges in teaching and CPD, and how we can support staff.</p> <p>Are having a virtual Year 6 open evening, as well as one for Post-16.</p> <p>Post-19</p> <p>AP gave an update. Induction started three weeks earlier and the greatest challenge was the constant changes. AP talked through some of the issues caused by the exam results. All of the queries and complaints have ended well – have come from a place of needing information and support.</p>

	<p>AP and CR worked very closely on enrolment following GCSE week.</p> <p>AP discussed the logistics of students accessing their lessons while retaining year group bubbles.</p> <p>Zoning in school</p> <p>CR gave an update. Students were welcomed back on Friday. There was a comprehensive induction period for the students, including space to talk about their feelings etc. about returning, as well as celebrating positive stories and achievements. This will continue to be a part of tutor times.</p> <p>CR praised the students for the way they have adapted. Year group zones have worked well and staff have been flexible and positive. Students have also responded well at break times.</p> <p>Most of the issues have been addressed – there are, ‘snag sheets’ for staff to capture issues.</p> <p>A plan to bring students in earlier is being looked at.</p> <p>DL talked about the work of the inclusion team and induction work. Tutor time on the first day included work around routines, how school would work and interacting with each-other etc.</p> <p>Learning mentors have been working with the Year 7 tutor groups, in a one hour workshop, to look at their wellbeing and resilience, as well as using this as an opportunity to identify any issues. This has now been completed with all Year 7s and will be repeated for the other years.</p> <p>This has helped the mentors to spot any issues early on and consider targeted group sessions to run, as well as one to one sessions for individual children.</p> <p>Need to work on how to get the consistent message out to larger groups of students together.</p> <p>Has become clear that it is impossible to socially distance in corridors and other communal areas of the school. JBu has, therefore, asked staff to wear face-coverings in communal areas of the school. JBu will start, ‘strongly recommending’ that students wear a face covering in communal areas. There is no mandate in the guidance for a face covering until, tier four, which is essentially the same as the previous lockdown.</p> <p>Discussion around the possibility of the need for bubbles to self-isolate if there is a positive test. If PHE advise that all students in a bubble need to isolate, this does not necessarily mean that all teachers of that year group will need to.</p> <p>Q – What about arriving and leaving? Other than communicating the guidance from Government, we have not tried to influence this. There have been some Year 7 students being driven to school but there has not been a noticeable increase in students being driven to/from school, so they are walking / cycling / using public transport. There is nothing we can do once they are not on the school premises.</p>
7	<p>Governor Conference</p> <p>Discussion around the possible options for this and the best timings.</p> <p>Discussion around the possibility of meeting in person. Have been trialling a process called, ‘fogging’ which may make meeting in person more feasible.</p> <p>LS to set up a doodle poll for Saturday mornings towards the end of November / early December</p>
8	<p>Review Committee Structures, Membership & Terms of Reference</p> <p>To accept the committee membership as it is for this meeting and any changes to be discussed between now and December. Terms of Reference to be discussed at the committee meetings.</p> <p>SF to discuss with the new Governors which committee they would like to join.</p> <p>Review Scheme of Delegation</p> <p>This was provided for information.</p> <p>Review Link Governor Roles</p>

	<p>To leave these as they are unless anyone wants to change, to discuss further in December.</p> <p>Q – Should there be a Governor to focus on risk liaison? There is no requirement for one, this is the responsibility of the Governing Body and specifically of audit function.</p> <p><i>RP left the meeting</i></p> <p>Additional Governor Appointments</p> <p>SF has someone who would like to join the Governing Body – to do this via A&S. Discussion around the decision-making process for this. The FGB will need to agree the co-option.</p> <p>LS & JF to follow up on the skills audit work to identify skills gaps.</p> <p>There is a need to improve the diversity of the Governing Body. Discussion around this.</p>
9	<p>Governing Body Objectives</p> <p>Governing Body objectives should be included in the school improvement plan. To be discussed at the Chairs’ meeting.</p>
10	<p>Minutes of last meetings, 9 July 2020 – Agreed as correct.</p>
11	<p>Matters Arising and Action List – See Actions Report</p> <p>Discussion around Link Governor visits. These can be done in a socially distanced way with face coverings etc. There will not be drop-ins to lessons etc. but visits are still possible. It is important to maintain Governance responsibilities. New Governors could potentially buddy up with current Link Governors.</p> <p>Governors to contact JBu.</p>
12	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>Admissions Criteria – qualifying period for staff JBu would like to reduce the qualifying period for staff to be able to apply for a priority place for their children from 2 years to 1.</p> <p>It is a very small number of children and is unlikely to impact on other priority groups.</p> <p>Discussion around the level of priority for children of staff.</p> <p>Agreed to delete to criteria of 2 years completely.</p> <p>To look at the average number of siblings joining school to decide whether to move up the list to priority 2 at FPGP on Nov 5.</p> <p>Agreed to consult on both points and decide based on what responses are received.</p> <p>LS to organise consultation with a view to having results by December FGB.</p>

Meeting closed at 8.35pm

Next Meeting – Thursday 10 December 2020, 6pm